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1. The judicial system in China has not been fully established, but the following organs are already in existence:
 - a. The People's Supreme Court and the People's Procurator General's Office of the Central Government.
 - b. The branches of the People's Supreme Court and the People's Procurator General's Office in the regional governments.
 - c. A Provincial Court of Justice or a Special Administrative Court of Justice in provincial governments and in the Special Commissioner's Offices which rank with the provincial government, such as the special municipalities.
 - d. A People's Court of Justice in municipalities and hsien.
 - e. District and Village Courts in lower sub-divisions.

No branches of the People's Procurator General's Office appear to be established below the regional level. The functions of this department at lower levels are exercised by the police.

2. Each court is responsible to its judicial superior and to the local administration of which it forms a part. Thus, the Municipal Court of Justice of Wuhan is responsible to the People's Supreme Court of the Central and South China region and also to the Wuhan Municipal Government. The court is on an equal footing with the Bureau of Civil Affairs and the Bureau of Public Safety, which are under the Municipal Government. For example, a sentence of death in a murder case is submitted by the court through the Municipal Government to the Central and South China Regional Government for approval before it is carried out.
3. In the older Communist areas, the judges were all appointed by the local government. However, this practice is now being rectified by the People's Supreme Court, which is gradually installing its nominees and establishing its right to appoint judges at all levels.

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-2-

4. The new laws have not yet been codified and practice is still unpredictable. However, there are always separate departments for civil and criminal cases. Criminal cases now tried are usually espionage or robbery. The bulk of civil cases, especially since the enactment of the 1950 Marriage Law, are matrimonial disputes. Property and money matters account for more suits in towns than in the country.
5. In all criminal cases the responsibility for collecting evidence rests entirely with the police, who do not bring a case to court until it is "cut and dried". The Communist police are thorough, quick, and ready to take responsibility, and are unfettered by red tape or personal considerations. They are free to act as they wish and may conduct searches and inquiries without prior approval.
6. Hearings in camera are usual in every Communist court. No one is allowed in court simply as a spectator. There is no advantage in having a lawyer to argue one's case, as the judge does not care for shades of meaning or subtle arguments, but decides on the basis of what the police tell him. Appeal is allowed, but hardly anyone takes advantage of it, as appeals are nearly always rejected.
7. In civil cases the plaintiff needs no lawyer to write his complaint in legal form. Anyone who can write intelligently can frame his own petition or someone else's. There are no professional scribes, as illiterates may have their petitions written by the court clerk free of charge on application.
8. When summons are issued to the plaintiff, defendant, and witness to appear in court, a first hearing is always arranged to seek settlement without trial. Judgement takes place only after the first attempt has failed. When a case is complicated and requires further investigation, the court appoints persons from the village administration (country) or the public safety section (town) to perform the task. In the city, there is a public safety section attached to each branch police station covering about 100 houses. Civil cases are dealt with without delay, and simple cases are settled at one hearing, while complicated cases may require from three to four hearings. The process is so simplified that the judge's desk is often used as the bench. The parties involved may often sit beside the desk and discuss the case without the help of a lawyer.
9. At the present time the only regulations promulgated are those governing the suppression of counter-revolutionaries. On other matters the judge relies on common sense, general legal principle, precedent, custom and reference to laws of the National Government.
10. Poor prisoners are fed by the government in jails but those with well-to-do relatives must have their food brought in by them. In practice, rice sufficient to feed more than one person is demanded from the family of a well-to-do prisoner. In Chiangning Jail, for instance, a well-to-do prisoner's family must send four catties of rice per day. In the model Tiger Bridge Prison, Nanking, there are printing shops, leather works and a cigarette factory, all employing prisoners. In Chiangning, prisoners are permitted out of the jail compound to attend sheep and ducks; others work in mines. Prisoners also attend political classes and discussion.
11. Under the authority of the Land Reform Regulations, promulgated on 4 July 1950, special local courts may be established by hsien and municipal governments to deal with offenses against the land reform law, such as the false declaration of property. For these ad hoc courts, the judge and his deputy and one-half the members of the bench are appointed by

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-3-

superior authority and the remaining members are elected by local organizations, such as the peasant's union of the hsien or municipality. Sentences of death or confiscation of property passed by such courts are subject to confirmation by the provincial government.

12. The freedom of methods used in the Communist legal system, such as search and questioning without warrant, are very much open to abuse for both political and personal ends. The prevailing temper also results in far too many automatic decisions in favor of the poorer party. However, it must be admitted that the judicial system is much more efficient and honest now than it ever was under the Nationalists. This is fully realized in China, and the law can be said to be one of the few branches of the Communist Government which is approved by all concerned.

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